The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news, economic and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor secretly in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1623 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C. TUESDAY, MAY 19, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 20

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

The little Lord Fauntleroy of Virginia, known in Congress as Rep. Howard W. Smith, is in for a fight this year.

This pip-squeak Congressman, who is a bank president and a gentleman farmer on the side, to say nothing of his ambitions to become a society lion, has been trying to hit labor below the belt for some years.

He has introduced bill after bill to abolish and demolish the rights of American workers and their trade unions. He has made speech after speech, under the protection of Congressional immunity, smearing the principles and policies of organized labor. His method of fighting has been foul all the way.

Well, labor is now going to take the offensive and carry the fight to Mr. Smith and right in his own ballyhoo. He's going to get the licking of his life.

Emmett C. Davison, Secretary-Treasurer of the International Association of Machinists, has entered the political ring against Smith. He has filed the necessary petitions making him a candidate for the Democratic nomination—which is equivalent to election—in the Virginia primaries next August.

Now Mr. Davison is no novice in politics. He is the former Mayor of Alexandria, Va., Smith's home town. He has powerful backing. He will be supported by organized labor and by Government employes throughout the 8th Virginia Congressional District, and they represent lots of votes.

Smith Is a Stooge

The American Federation of Labor, the Railroad Brotherhoods and the CIO have all united behind Mr. Davison. Anyone who underestimates the combined strength of their members, even in a non-industrial district, is just a plain fool. When the votes of Government employes are added to the solid labor bloc, Mr. Davison will be riding high.

And it is only common-sense that the thousands of Government workers who reside across the Potomac River from the nation's capital and commute to work will reject Smith just as unanimously as other workers.

They know that Smith is a Democrat in name only. They know that he is part and parcel of a vicious political machine which gives lip-service to the Roosevelt Administration but has engaged in every possible underhanded trick to hurt it.

Smith is just a willing stooge of the Byrd political machine. The Byrd we're talking about is Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, perhaps the worst traitor to President Roosevelt among the Southern Democrats. Smith is one of his henchmen.

Senator Byrd succeeded in capturing political control in Virginia because no one heretofore has bothered to fight him. He is a high-ranking Roosevelt-hater. He is the spokesman for banking interests in the United States Senate. An expert publicity-grabber, he cloaks his most vicious attacks upon the Government and upon labor under hypocritical reverence. Thus he poses as the economical conservative operating in order to mask his attempts to tear down the entire New Deal.

Smith Smells Fishy

Only recently, Senator Byrd made a dastardly charge that labor was loafing on the job in war industries. To support his statement he released information which he said had been given to him by the Navy Department. The story sounded shocking and the newspapers gave it a big play. But it was immediately repudiated by the Government. And further investigation disclosed that in the very plants mentioned by Byrd labor was doing a fine job but management was falling down. In fact, the Government had to take over one of the factories mentioned by Byrd because the management was suspected of Nazi sympathies.

Similarly, his stooge Smith has not been able to make a single one of his charges against labor stand up nor has he been able to secure the enactment of a single one of his anti-labor bills. Why? Well, it is because he knows that every time Smith sponsors a labor bill his colleagues in the House of Representatives immediately suspect something fishy.

By contrast, Mr. Davison offers the patriotic voters of the 8th District of Virginia a straightforward, honest platform. In announcing his candidacy, he stated flatly that Smith has been misrepresenting the voters of his classes. Mr. Davison is not confining his appeals to labor. He asks all voters in the district to support him. He stands for President Roosevelt's policies and for all-out support of the nation's war effort. And this is what he says of Smith:

"Farmers, veterans, small merchants, businessmen, bankers, editors and other professional people are up in arms against the reckless, unpatriotic and hysterical speeches of Howard Smith in Congress. His tactics of turning class against class have created suspicion, doubt and confusion. He is proving the nation's No. 1 disrupter of 100 per cent prosecution of the war."

U. S. Army To Award "A" Button To Workers For Fine Performance

Washington, D. C.—The War Department announced the creation of a new award, to be known as the Army "A" Award, to be conferred upon war-production plants and workers conspicuous for outstanding performance in Army production.

The award will comprise an Army "A" Flag for the manufacturing plant and a specially designed lapel button for each worker in that plant.

Robert P. Patterson, Undersecretary of War, announced that the Army Board for Production Awards to formulate policies and rules governing the award, and to make the final selection, has appointed as its first board members: Lieutenant General William S. Knudsen, Major General Charles M. Wesson, Brigadier General Bennett E. Myers, Edward F. McGrady, Special Assistant to the Undersecretary of War; A. R. Glancy, and J. E. Harrell.

The award to workers in industry, which is presented simultaneously with the flag award to the plant, is a gold lapel button. This button depicts an aroused American eagle in gold, enclosed in a blue field within a white ring, which in turn is encircled by eight, joined red bars. Superimposed on the top portion of the device is a gold capital letter "A," and on the lower red portion are the words "War Work" in gold.

All plants engaged in War Department production and construction are eligible for Army "A" Awards.

Quality and quantity of production in the light of available facilities will be the factors that will govern the selection of the recipients for the awards. Other factors to be weighed will include: (1) Overcoming of production obstacles; (2) Avoidance of stoppages; (3) Maintenance of fair labor standards; (4) Training of additional labor forces; (5) Effective management; (6) Record on accidents, health, sanitation, and plant protection; (7) Utilization of subcontracting facilities.

OPA Assures Workers Enough Gas To Drive To And From War Jobs

Washington, D. C.—The Office of Price Administration pleaded for and got public statement that despite gasoline rationing in various sections of the nation, workers in war industries will be allowed sufficient fuel supplies to take them to and from their jobs.

The statement was issued after a visit to OPA headquarters by a committee representing the Metal Trades Dept., C. O. Building Trades Council, including President C. F. Preller and Secretary John Loeber.

"Thousands of workers on war construction jobs in the East Coast gasoline ration area, who need their cars not only to drive back and forth to work but also to travel from job to job," said the OPA statement, "are assured adequate supplies of gasoline for these purposes.

"Many of these workers are employed in the rationed area on temporary basis, and are concerned over the quantities of gasoline they can get under rationing conditions.

"Because of a lack of housing facilities near construction jobs, many workers, have to be lodged several miles from their places of work. Also, many workers who need their cars to travel from job to job.

"Application for additional supplies will continue to be made to the local rationing board. The local board is authorized by OPA to issue ration cards providing for the purchase of the necessary quantity of gasoline."

ELECTRICAL LOCAL TO BUY $4,000,000 OF WAR BONDS

New York City.—More than four thousand members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 3, an AFL affiliate, met at Manhattan Center and without a dissenting vote ratified a plan under which all of the union's twenty thousand members will have ten per cent of their wages deducted from their pay envelopes for the purchase of four million dollars of war bonds annually. Harry Van Arsdale, Jr., business manager of the union, announced. The plan will go into effect immediately.

Executive Council Hails Labor's Great War Record; Credits "Astounding" Production Gains To Unions And Congratulates Workers For Doing Swell Job

A Salute to Labor!

Following is the text of the AFL Executive Council's declaration on the no-strike record:

The Executive Council salutes the five million members of the American Federation of Labor for the inspiring way in which they have responded to the nation's war emergency.

Never before in the history of our country has such a fine record of steady, uninterrupted and highly accelerated production been achieved by labor.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, the Executive Council announced a strict no-strike policy for the guidance of affiliated unions. Since that time there has not been a single strike or stoppage of work authorized or condoned by any union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

This is a record of which the entire nation can well be proud. Our trade unions have measured up to their responsibilities like an irresistible, well-disciplined army.

In the relatively few unauthorized stoppages that have occurred, the unions themselves have taken the initiative in persuading the workers to go back to the job at once and submit their grievances to mediation, conciliation or arbitration by established Government agencies.

The record made is all the more remarkable when we consider that it was accomplished during a period of unprecedented industrial expansion and dislocating living costs. The men and women of labor are faithfully performing their tasks under heavy strains, under severe conditions and, in many cases, despite oppressive grievances. They are giving America the kind of service that cannot be measured in terms of money, the kind of voluntary sacrifice that cannot be obtained by compulsion. Their patriotism is expressed not in words, but in work.

Official figures just made public by the National War Labor Board show that last month the percentage of idleness due to labor disputes was only 9/100 of 1 per cent. A comparison with the same month last year shows that only one-sixth the time was lost while more than three times the amount of work was performed.

The Executive Council wishes to point out that these figures include all of labor in America. By comparison, the record of American Federation of Labor members was even better.

Nevertheless, the Executive Council summits that when time lost by stoppages is reduced to a few hundredths of one per cent, the labor movement by voluntary methods has achieved a pinnacle of performance which could never even be approached by compulsory laws. Considering that human beings are not and never will be without faults, we can congratulate the workers of America on coming so close to perfection.

The Executive Council declares that the record made by American Federation of Labor unions and their members since the war has far surpassed the most optimistic expectations. We pledge ourselves not only to maintain this record for the duration but to exceed it by every means within the power of the trade union movement.

Labor Hits Production Peak!

Washington, D. C.—President William Green presented to the opening session of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor a significant report on war production obtained from Government agencies and from labor sources.

The report showed amazing increases in the output of planes, ships, guns, tanks and ammunition since December 7.

President Green told the Executive Council:

"America is now truly the greatest arsenal in the world. The production figures I have received from all parts of the country are astounding. The Government is understandably cautious about releasing the information but I can assure you that it offers no aid or comfort to our enemies. On the contrary, the current production, plus even greater expansion already in sight, adds up to the doom of the Axis Powers.

"All Americans can take pride in the tremendous job the industry of America and the Government have done in so short a time. And the best part of it is that this is just a start. By the time our production facilities are fully mobilized, we will be outpounding our enemies by a wide margin and victory will be assured.

"I cannot emphasize too strongly that America's vast progress on the production front would have been impossible were it not for the loyal and devoted service being rendered day in and day out by millions of American workers. Their production achievements and their spirit is unmatched anywhere else in the world."

Highlights of Mr. Green's report on production in specific fields follow:

Planes

The delivery rate of Flying Fortresses has more than doubled since Pearl Harbor. Similar progress is reported in other types now being accomplished in other types of heavy bombers, for which the basic parts are manufactured entirely need. The general production rate of all types of combat planes has increased seven-fold in the past nine months. Output in existing plants has been speeded up tremendously, and new factories and new facilities are being completed for still further expansion. More planes are now being produced each month than in the entire year of 1939, when the program of military aircraft got under way.

Tanks

America is now exceeding the Axis Powers in the production of tanks. This is all the more remarkable when we consider that in August, 1940—two years ago—when civilian plants first undertook to make tanks. Already tank production this year has surpassed the output for the entire year of 1941.

Ships

Despite shortages in materials, tremendous progress has been obtained in shipbuilding. The Maritime merchant ships are being launched on schedule or ahead of schedule. In April, thirty-six new cargo ships were added to our growing fleet.

These accomplishments are only a forestaste of what is coming. Two shipyards are now working on schedule which call for the delivery of a 10,000 ton Liberty cargo ship each every day of the year.

Mass production methods are now being applied to the production of the smaller combat craft and before long America will have enough of them to comb the seas clean of all enemy submarines and completely dominate the shipping routes which are the lifeline of our allies.

Guns and Ammunition

Staggering increases in the production of guns are noted each month, especially in anti-aircraft guns.

The rate at which explosives are being produced is many times what it was at this time last year. One single plant, built since the war program started, is able now to produce more TNT and smokeless powder than our entire peace-time industry.

Construction

New war factories are being completed daily far ahead of schedule. We are informed that a Navy Yard warehouse, which was to have been built in 90 days, has just been completed only thirty days after ground was broken. Military camps, airports and war housing projects are going up at miraculous speed.

LAWRENCE O'KEEFE DIES; MOLDERS' EX-PRESIDENT

Cincinnati, Ohio.—Lawrence O'Keefe, former president of the International Molders and Foundry Workers Union of North America, died at the Metropole Hotel here on May 13 where he and Mrs. O'Keefe had been guests for a week en route to their home in Schenectady, N. Y., from Miami Beach, Fla., where they had spent the winter.

Mr. O'Keefe was born in Belleville, Ont., March 31, 1874. He became a member of the Molders' local union in New York City in 1897. In 1904, he moved to Detroit, Mich. He was elected a member of the International Executive Board of the International Union in 1902, a vice president in 1903, and became president when the late president, Michael J. Kennedy, died in 1932. Elected president by the Chicago convention in 1934, he served in that office until 1938, when he resigned because of ill health.

FLAG WEEK CELEBRATION SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 8-14

Washington, D. C.—Plans for the celebration of Flag Week, starting Sunday, June 8, and ending on the birthday of Old Glory—were announced by the United States Flag Association. Secretary of War Stimson is chairman of the association's national council, of which AFL President Green is a member.

The purpose of the Flag Week celebration is to foster national unity and emphasize the ideals and institutions symbolized by the American Flag.

The several days of Flag Week have been separately designated to identify distinct elements which will conduct exercises honoring the Stars and Stripes. The designations are: June 8, Government day; June 9, Commerce and Industry day; June 10, Education day; June 11, Civilian Defense day; June 12, Workers' day; June 13, Civic Spirit day; June 14, Flag Day (religious observance).

Proposal To Cut Personal Exemptions In Tax Bill Hit By Council

Washington, D. C.—The Executive Council protested vigorously to Congress against the proposed lowering of personal exemptions in the new income tax law. The Council said:

"We realize that the fearful cost of this war must be paid by the people of our country by taxes but we insist that the Government should continue to follow the basic principle that the heaviest burden be placed upon those best able to pay.

"American workers have always been willing to assume their just share of the cost of Government and they are making substantial sacrifices today to help win the war. But lowering of personal exemptions in the income tax will not result in equality of sacrifice. It will hurt most those who are least able to pay.

"Not only will families in the substandard income group be affected, but also those in the medium brackets will be hard hit.

"A married man with two dependents earning $50 a week will have his income tax boosted 250 per cent even at the present rate if his personal exemption as the head of a family is cut from $1,500 a year to $1,200.

"We don't doubt for a moment that Congress will exact heavy taxes from persons with high incomes this year, but we submit that it is much less of a sacrifice to give up luxuries for the sake of the war than to destroy the minimum standards of decent living."

Also considering the report submitted by President Green, the Executive Council adopted the following resolution:

"The Executive Council commends President Green and the Legislative Committee of the American Federation of Labor for its tireless and successful efforts to prevent the enactment of legislation which would have deprived American workers of their freedom and hampered the efforts of trade unions to assist in the nation's war effort.

"Practically all of the dangerous proposals rejected by Congress were of a compulsory nature and would have defeated the very ends they ostensibly sought to achieve.

"American workers will not stand for regimentation. They will not be driven like slaves. They are willing and fighting to prevent that very threat from foreign aggressors. It would be the height of folly to destroy their morale and impair their freedoms in the name of a war which is being waged to preserve freedom.

"We consider it highly significant that the great majority of the anti-labor proposals were sponsored and supported by individuals and groups consistently opposed to labor in the past. Some used the most despicable methods to arouse public hysteria and frighten Congress. The wholly ridiculous charge was even made that America is 'losing' the war because of the present labor policy.

"The truth is that America is winning this war because American workers, along with all other American citizens, are doing their very best for victory.

"Our confidence in the heroic spirit of American labor is not based on empty hope but on actual performance. The record of war production increases is the best evidence of that performance.

"Under the circumstances, we submit that labor should be permitted to concentrate its energies on the herculean tasks before it, without being constantly harassed by legislative assaults. The officers of the American Federation of Labor have been compelled to spend a great deal of time and effort defeating more than fifty legislative proposals during this session of Congress alone. Not a single one of these measures has been enacted into law. Congress has rendered good judgment. We suggest that it continue to show good judgment by permitting labor to do its war job in peace."

AFL GIVES BACKING TO DAVISON CAMPAIGN

Washington D. C.—President William Green announced that the Executive Council of the AFL had given its hearty endorsement to the candidacy of Emmett C. Davison, Secretary-Treasurer of the International Association of Machinists, for the Democratic nomination for Representative in the 8th District of Virginia in opposition to the incumbent labor-hater Rep. Howard Smith.

Mr. Green said the Council had voted to support Mr. Davison's campaign and urged all union organizations in the Congressional district to join forces behind labor's candidate.

PAY BONUS URGED FOR U. S. WORKERS

Washington, D. C.—The AFL Executive Council urged the enactment of the Ramspeck Bill (H. R. 7071) which provides for payment of an additional $200 a year to all civilian employes of the United States Government and the District of Columbia.

The Council said:

"This is a temporary emergency measure which is to remain in effect only for the duration of the war and six months thereafter. It is not in any sense a permanent pay increase.

"The bill was introduced at the instance of the various unions of Government employes affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, the Building Construction Trades Department, the Metal Trades Department, the Washington, D. C. Central Labor Union, and the railroad brotherhoods.

"At a conference held by these organizations, it was shown that despite tremendously increased living costs workers in the Government service have not received comparable increases in compensation. In fact, large groups of Government workers are now receiving the same pay scale as in 1939. Many Government workers pay rates are far below those paid in private industry.

"The inequalities of the Ramspeck Bill and the simple justice of its provisions cannot be questioned. Representatives of the Government and throughout the nation have cheerfully undertaken the staggering burden of war work and are giving America the highest type of service.

"It is only fair that the Government should in this small measure afford them some protection against higher living costs."

AFL AUTO WORKERS WIN ANOTHER NLRB ELECTION

Milwaukee, Wis.—In a four-way balloting among the employes of the Automatic Products Company, the United Automobile Workers of America, AFL affiliate, won a National Labor Relations Board election by a decisive majority.

Congress Urged To Let Labor Do Its War Job In Peace As Council Notes Defeat of All Anti-Labor Bills

Washington, D. C.—Saluting American labor's "inspiring" war record, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor pledged itself to exert "every means within the power of the trade union movement" for victory.

President William Green submitted to the Council an official report of "astounding" increases in the production of planes, tanks, ships and guns which, he said, "add up to the doom of the Axis powers."

The Council responded by giving the highest praise to AFL workers and their unions who have "measured up to their responsibilities" by strict compliance with the Federation's no-strike policy and "are giving America the kind of service that cannot be measured in terms of money."

"Their patriotism is expressed not in words, but in hard work," the Executive Council said.

"Never before in the history of our country has such a fine record of steady, uninterrupted and highly accelerated production been achieved by labor."

At the same time the Executive Council expressed gratification over the fact that not a single one of the 50-odd anti-labor legislative proposals considered by Congress at this session has been enacted into law.

The resolution on anti-labor legislation wound up the first half of the Executive Council's regular Spring meeting in the nation's capital.

In reporting on the heavy barrage of bills and amendments fired at organized labor during the current Congressional session, President Green said:

"Despite high-pressure propaganda campaigns intended to mislead the public and to intimidate members of Congress into supporting these vicious proposals, not a single one of them has been enacted into law.

"The enemies of labor have been soundly defeated in every crucial test vote. I am hopeful that no anti-labor legislation will be passed during the remainder of this session of Congress."

After considering the report submitted by President Green, the Executive Council adopted the following resolution:

"The Executive Council commends President Green and the Legislative Committee of the American Federation of Labor for its tireless and successful efforts to prevent the enactment of legislation which would have deprived American workers of their freedom and hampered the efforts of trade unions to assist in the nation's war effort.

"Practically all of the dangerous proposals rejected by Congress were of a compulsory nature and would have defeated the very ends they ostensibly sought to achieve.

"American workers will not stand for regimentation. They will not be driven like slaves. They are willing and fighting to prevent that very threat from foreign aggressors. It would be the height of folly to destroy their morale and impair their freedoms in the name of a war which is being waged to preserve freedom.

"We consider it highly significant that the great majority of the anti-labor proposals were sponsored and supported by individuals and groups consistently opposed to labor in the past. Some used the most despicable methods to arouse public hysteria and frighten Congress. The wholly ridiculous charge was even made that America is 'losing' the war because of the present labor policy.

"The truth is that America is winning this war because American workers, along with all other American citizens, are doing their very best for victory.

"Our confidence in the heroic spirit of American labor is not based on empty hope but on actual performance. The record of war production increases is the best evidence of that performance.

"Under the circumstances, we submit that labor should be permitted to concentrate its energies on the herculean tasks before it, without being constantly harassed by legislative assaults. The officers of the American Federation of Labor have been compelled to spend a great deal of time and effort defeating more than fifty legislative proposals during this session of Congress alone. Not a single one of these measures has been enacted into law. Congress has rendered good judgment. We suggest that it continue to show good judgment by permitting labor to do its war job in peace."

LABOR FOR VICTORY!

Meany And Harrison Join In Praise Of Workers' Efforts To Win War

Washington, D. C.—Labor's solemn duty is to turn out vital materials of war at the fast-est pace and in such quantities that victory for the United Nations will be assured in the shortest possible time," George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, declared.

Mr. Meany was interviewed on the "Labor For Victory" program over a nation-wide NBC network about the building and work of the AFL to the Executive Council.

In another interview on the same program, George M. Harrison, AFL vice president and president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, disclosed that American railroads are accomplishing "miracles of operation" by efficient use of labor and equipment and that there is no danger of a transportation breakdown like that of the last war.

Pointing to amazing production increases in planes, ships, tanks and guns, Mr. Meany said:

"Not a single step toward this remarkable achievement of war production would have been possible without the whole-hearted patriotic teamwork of America's industrial workers and the trade unions that represent them."

Labor has helped, he explained, by "working as never before," by boosting per man efficiency, by putting in longer hours and by faithfully abiding by the no-strike policy. Abstention from strikes has been organized labor's "most outstanding contribution" to the war production program, Mr. Meany declared.

One of the most important problems before the Executive Council meeting, Mr. Meany revealed, is to help the Manpower Mobilization Commission work out a practical system for providing a full supply of trained men and women on jobs where their services are urgently needed. Labor has not waited to be told what to do in this respect, he declared. The construction unions put their own manpower mobilization programs into effect to provide sufficient skilled workers to complete the Army's construction program in record time and "in every factory in the nation today expert journeymen are training thousands of apprentices in various crafts right on the job." In this way, Mr. Meany continued, labor is helping to build a new army-of production soldiers."

Mr. Harrison revealed that the railroad industry and railroad labor "have the biggest job in history on our hands right now." Tremendous demands have been made on the railroads, he said, for transporting troops and hauling millions of tons of raw materials and finished war equipment.

"I am glad to say that we have met all these heavy demands and are preparing to handle a much greater flood of business," Mr. Harrison added.

"Despite the increased traffic expected, he said, because of vastly increased war production, the completion of construction shipping due to the submarine menace and shortages of rubber and gasoline which will cut down truck traffic.

Asked whether there was any danger of a breakdown like that in the last war, Mr. Harrison replied:

"The answer is definitely no. In the last twenty years the railroad industry has been modernized and made much more efficient. It can, therefore, days to move a loaded freight car across the country. Today we are using the spirit of all hands is so high that we are accomplishing miracles of operation."